

REMARKS

The subject application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed May 6, 2010.

Claims 1-16, 18-21, 23, 24, 35-37, 39-42, 44 and 45 are pending in the subject application, with claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 13, 18, 35 and 39 being in independent form. Claims 1, 3, 6, 7, and 13 are amended herein. Specifically, the claims are amended herein to more clearly recite the invention, particularly that the controller or robot acts "in response to the position signal". Claims 17, 22, 25-34, 38 and 43 were previously cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice to Applicants' right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in the future.

Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been introduced by this Amendment. Entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Interview

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the personal interview of July 15, 2010 and the interview summary mailed July 20, 2010. Applicant agrees with the interview summary.

Rejection of Claims 1-16, 18-21, 23, 24, 35-37, 39-42, 44 and 45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) – Green, Webster, Jr., and Vesely

The Examiner rejected claims 1-16, 18-21, 23, 24, 35-37, 39-42, 44 and 45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,808,665 to Green (hereinafter "Green") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,123,699 to Webster, Jr. (hereinafter "Webster, Jr."), and U.S. Patent No. 6,246,898 to Vesely et al. (hereinafter "Vesely").

In response, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-16, 18-21, 23, 24, 35-37, 39-42, 44 and 45 for at least the following reasons.

As discussed in the personal interview on July 15, 2010, Green relates to servomechanisms with hand-operated control. In servomechanisms, the apparatus responds to hand movements or motions of the operator. By contrast, the present invention relates to robotic control of mechanisms. The independent claims of the present invention recite "a controller ... adapted to manipulate the thumb control in response to the position signal", that is, the controller determines the movement to make in response to the position signal, not in response to an operator's movement. In other words, the controller or robot moves the thumb control (as recited in independent claims 1 and 6) and/or the distal tip (as recited in independent claims 7, 12, 13, 18, 35 and 39) by analyzing the position signal and determining the movement to be performed. Thus the controller, as recited, does not operate by sensing movement related to an operator and performing the sensed movement, as a servomechanical device as taught by Green does. Instead, the controller recited in the independent claims manipulates the thumb control and/or the distal tip in response to the position signal, determining its movements by calculating its desired location based on the position signal. Hence, Green does not teach or suggest the feature of "a controller ... adapted to manipulate the thumb control in response to the position signal" as recited in independent claims 1 and 6, or a controller manipulating a distal tip in response to the position signal, as recited in the remaining independent claims.

Webster, Jr., as presently understood by Applicants, describes omni-directional steerable catheters. Vesely, as presently understood by Applicants, describes a method for carrying out a medical procedure using a 3-D tracking and imaging system. However, neither

Webster, Jr. nor Vesely disclose or suggest subject matter to overcome the above-identified deficiencies of Green.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Green, Webster, Jr., and Vesely, taken individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of the robot specified in the independent claims of the present application, so that these claims, as well as their dependent claims, are patentable over Green, Webster, Jr., and Vesely.

Withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-16, 18-21, 23, 24, 35-37, 39-42, 44 and 45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Green, Webster, Jr., and Vesely is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the subject application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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